

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 354

August 3, 1995, 10:42 a.m.
Page S-11239 Temp. Record

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION/\$300 Million Missile Defense Cut

SUBJECT: National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1996 . . . S. 1026. Thurmond motion to table the Dorgan amendment No. 2087.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 51-48

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1026, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1996, will authorize \$264.7 billion in total budget authority for the Department of Defense, national security programs of the Department of Energy, civil defense, and military construction accounts. This amount is \$7 billion more than requested (\$5.3 billion more for procurement and \$1.7 billion more for research and development), and is \$2.6 billion less than the amount approved in the House-passed bill.

The Dorgan amendment would cut \$300 million of the amount provided to develop and deploy by 2003, with an initial system in place by 1999, a multi-site national missile defense system to guard against limited ballistic missile attacks.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Thurmond moved to table the Dorgan amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

Yesterday, only 5 Senators opposed a sense-of-the-Senate amendment stating that the American people should be defended against accidental, intentional, or limited ballistic missile attack. The Missile Defense Act as contained in this bill will provide for an interim defense system by as early as 1999 and a fully deployed system by 2002. The Dorgan amendment would delay it on the wistful hope that it will not be necessary that soon. For a savings of \$300 million this year, out of total Federal spending of \$1.5 trillion, our colleagues are ready to take a huge risk. If they are wrong, the next major terrorist attack in the United States may not target just one building in a city; the whole city may go. A few years from now, we do not want to witness the devastation caused by a chemical, biological, or nuclear ballistic missile attack, and know that we could have prevented that attack by our votes here today.

(See other side)

YEAS (51)			NAYS (48)			NOT VOTING (1)	
Republicans (47 or 89%)	Democrats (4 or 9%)		Republicans (6 or 11%)	Democrats (42 or 91%)		Republicans (1)	Democrats (0)
Abraham	Inhofe	Heflin	Chafee	Akaka	Inouye	Campbell- ²	
Ashcroft	Kempthorne	Hollings	Grassley	Baucus	Johnston		
Bennett	Kyl	Lieberman	Gregg	Biden	Kennedy	EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE: 1—Official Buisiness 2—Necessarily Absent 3—Illness 4—Other	
Bond	Lott	Nunn	Hatfield	Bingaman	Kerrey		
Brown	Lugar		Jeffords	Boxer	Kerry		
Burns	Mack		Kassebaum	Bradley	Kohl		
Coats	McCain			Breaux	Lautenberg		
Cochran	McConnell			Bryan	Leahy		
Cohen	Murkowski			Bumpers	Levin		
Coverdell	Nickles			Byrd	Mikulski		
Craig	Packwood			Conrad	Moseley-Braun		
D'Amato	Pressler			Daschle	Moynihan		
DeWine	Roth			Dodd	Murray		
Dole	Santorum			Dorgan	Pell		
Domenici	Shelby			Exon	Pryor		
Faircloth	Simpson			Feingold	Reid		
Frist	Smith			Feinstein	Robb		
Gorton	Snowe			Ford	Rockefeller		
Gramm	Specter			Glenn	Sarbanes		
Grams	Stevens			Graham	Simon		
Hatch	Thomas			Harkin	Wellstone		
Helms	Thompson					SYMBOLS: AY—Announced Yea AN—Announced Nay PY—Paired Yea PN—Paired Nay	
Hutchison	Thurmond						
	Warner						

In the 1980s, President Reagan announced that the United States would begin research on how to protect the United States from a ballistic missile attack. This plan was called the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Prior to this announcement, U.S. policy had been to rely solely on Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). Under that policy, both the United States and the Soviet Union worked to make certain that they would have enough weapons that would survive a preemptive strike by the other side to be able to retaliate with a massive strike. With the supposed certainty of mass destruction on both sides, the theory went that neither side would be MAD enough to attack first. Many Members derided President Reagan's SDI policy as "Star Wars." They insisted that it would not work, that it could lead the Soviet Union to attack us, and that it would destroy arms control efforts. Instead, it forced the Soviet Union into serious negotiations on nuclear weapons. According to the Russian Ambassador to the United States, Vladimir Lukin, SDI hastened the end of the Cold War by 5 years. Since SDI and its successor programs began, \$38 billion has been spent on ABM research, development, and deployment. To those Senators who complain about this cost we invite them to consider the hundreds of billions of dollars more we would have had to spend on defense if the Cold War had continued for another 5 years.

Much has been made by certain Senators of the Defense Intelligence Agency's estimate that no new ballistic threat to the United States will be developed by a hostile nation within the next 10 years. These Senators are looking at only one way of acquiring missiles. This 10-year estimate is based on indigenous development. If a country buys its technology from China, or if it adapts peaceful satellite technology for military use, or if it acquires technology through the black market, it can gain intercontinental ballistic missile capabilities in much less than 10 years. Further, even if this 10-year estimate is accurate, we remind our colleagues that it will take nearly 10 years to develop this system. Having the system come on-line at the same time as our colleagues say the threat may emerge does not sound like bad timing to us.

Our colleagues also seem to be quite impressed that the Defense Department is officially opposed to moving forward with rapid deployment. For our part, we are not surprised that a Secretary of Defense, who serves as the President's representative, has echoed the Administration's statement that this funding for an early deployment is not needed. We think what is more instructive, though, is his statement earlier this year on the obsolescence of the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) theory: "The bad news is that in this era deterrence may not provide even the cold comfort it did during the Cold War. We may be facing terrorists or rogue regimes with ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons at the same time in the future. And they may not buy into our deterrence theory. Indeed, they may be madder than MAD." We also find more instructive that earlier this year his Administration informed us that an additional \$500 million, not the \$300 million in this bill, could wisely be spend on ABM technologies.

Our colleagues are absolutely certain that no one could be "madder than MAD." We did not hear any such confident assertions during the Persian Gulf War when Saddam Hussein was launching SCUD missile attacks against U.S. forces and even against Tel Aviv, Israel, which was not involved in the war. Then, the assumption was that Hussein would willingly use weapons of mass destruction. We knew he had used chemical weapons before, and no one thought he would hesitate to use them for fear of retaliation. If the Israelis had not destroyed his nuclear development program several years earlier, he would likely have had nuclear weapons. Would our colleagues say that retaliation would have been certain if he had used them? Hussein has said that he would use a nuclear ballistic missile to destroy Washington, D.C., if he had such a missile and thought it was in his interest. Who here really doubts him? Our colleagues have theories that logically explain to them why no fanatical, despotic country would seek to develop and then use ballistic missiles. We take cold comfort in their theories when we look at the facts. Many countries, including Iraq and North Korea, have extensive missile development programs. The North Koreans will have a missile that can strike Hawaii, Guam, and Alaska within 3 years to 5 years. North Korea, Iraq, and about 20 other countries are developing weapons of mass destruction. North Korea almost certainly already has nuclear weapons. Our colleagues tell us that their theory is that these countries will not develop ballistic missiles, but they are developing them; they tell us they will never use them, but Hussein for one has already threatened us. With all due respect, we will prepare our defenses according to the facts instead of to their theory.

The next line of attack our colleagues have taken against developing a limited ballistic missile defense is to claim that it will never work. Not surprisingly, they have brought out their usual "Star Wars" canard that the proposal is to build some grandiose defense using untested technologies which will definitely be expensive but very well may not work. The truth, though, is that the Missile Defense Act as contained in this bill is not an attempt to develop a "Star Wars" defense against an all-out ballistic missile attack. Instead, it is intended to provide protection against a limited attack. It is a modest, low-risk program for which most of the technology already exists. We know we can do it, the only question is whether we will provide the protection the American people deserve. As for the cost, our colleagues have persisted in quoting a \$48 billion cost estimate. The Administration estimated \$24.2 billion, though that estimate included the cost of the Brilliant Eyes program which is not part of this missile defense. When that cost is subtracted, one finds that the cost of building this system will be \$18 billion. We find this cost to be acceptable. Our colleagues, on the other hand, would have us spend a steady amount for research and development each year, without ever giving enough to begin deploying a system. In other words, our colleagues would rather have us spend a few billion dollars for nothing instead of \$18 billion to provide a real, workable defense from ballistic missiles.

The next attack we have heard from our colleagues, which we have in fact been hearing since the 1980s when missile defenses were first proposed, is that building this system will destroy arms control efforts. They insist that building a limited missile defense will automatically destroy the ABM Treaty, and that Russia will respond by breaking or refusing to sign arms control agreements. They assume that Russia is going to act illogically. Certainly Russia has blustered on this agreement, but it is not really fearful that

AUGUST 3, 1995

VOTE NO. 354

the United States is going to attack it. Russia and the United States are no longer opposing forces. It is in the interests of both countries to have limited missile defenses to protect against the minor missile arsenals that are being developed by third world nations. Russia may use a withdrawal from the ABM Treaty as a pretext for keeping more of its nuclear weapons, but if it really decides it wants to keep more of its weapons our colleagues should rest assured that it will find a pretext. Additionally, the language in this bill does not require a violation of the Treaty. It will eventually require a renegotiation or a withdrawal from the treaty to allow for the deployment of a multi-site defense, but it will not, as our colleagues imply, insist on an abrogation. Our colleagues need to quit looking at this through Cold War eyes.

If it comes down to a choice between having an ABM Treaty or a limited missile defense, clearly the need for the defense is greater. Why do we need an ABM Treaty? That treaty is to guarantee Mutual Assured Destruction under Cold War realities that no longer exist. Russia itself has repeatedly recognized the advisability in the post-Cold War world for both the United States and Russia to develop limited ABM systems. Russia will of course use this issue as a bargaining chip, perhaps to seek more U.S. funds, but it is not about to destroy relations with the United States on an issue on which the countries have a common interest.

The final argument that is raised against building this defense is that it is less likely to be needed than other defenses. Our colleagues tell us that we should be more worried about smuggled weapons or cruise missiles than ballistic missiles. In response, we are worried about those means of attack as well, and have authorized funds to defend against them. We prefer to arm against all threats, not just those threats which our colleagues guess are the most likely to be used.

Considering the destructiveness of the type of weapons we are talking about, we think most Americans agree with this approach. Americans want, and deserve, to be protected against the threat of limited ballistic missile attacks which is rapidly emerging in the world. We therefore strongly urge our colleagues to table the Dorgan amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

The Dorgan amendment would cut \$300 million in spending for a project that the Pentagon does not want, that the country does not need, and that will prove very detrimental to national security interests if it is allowed to proceed. The Administration requested \$371 million for its ongoing research and development program for a strategic anti-ballistic missile (ABM) defense system. This bill will add \$300 million to that request and will require deployment of an operational system by 2003 and an interim system by 1999. We cannot think of a more reckless, nonsensical demand.

The Administration's request does not plan for ever deploying a missile defense, nor should it. All the request is for is a low level of funding for basic research in order to keep our options open. We should, prudently, be ahead of the game in basic research in case some day the need to deploy a national ABM system arises, but the reality is that it is extremely unlikely we will ever have that need.

According to General Clapper of the Defense Intelligence Agency, no hostile foreign nation will be able to develop ballistic missiles that can reach the United States within the next 10 years. Further, he said no new nation even has an interest in developing such missiles. Secretary of Defense Perry concurred with General Clapper, saying that "a balanced strategic missile threat has not emerged." Both General Clapper and Secretary Perry oppose this additional funding as unnecessary.

The Administration has also warned of the danger this provision poses to arms control. This \$300 million is specifically for developing a multi-site, national ABM system. Such a system is clearly a violation of the ABM Treaty. This bill, therefore, announces that the United States is going to violate the treaty unless it is changed. The Russians have said that they will not look favorably on the deployment of a multi-site system. The Russians have said that if we violate the ABM Treaty they will not ratify START II. We think it is also likely that they will stop living up to their commitment to disarm under the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty because complying with that treaty is very expensive. The result of building a limited missile defense system that will be capable of stopping a handful of ballistic missiles is that the United States will have thousands of more ballistic missiles aimed at it, and Europe will still face a massive Russian military force.

In return for destroying our relations with Russia, this plan will have the United States spend up to \$48 billion on building a system that may not even work. The Congressional Budget Office gave us the \$48 billion estimate based on a system in Grand Forks, North Dakota and 5 other States. One of Secretary Perry's complaints with this system is that the United States is not certain which technologies are the best to use. Requiring early deployment at this stage will force the United States to guess which option is best. In a year or two, if it becomes apparant that we have guessed wrong and invested in an ineffective system, billions of dollars will have been wasted. In our opinion, it is a fantasy to think any ABM system will ever work. Any money spent on this fantasy is money wasted.

Even if this system can provide a limited missile defense, it will be against a nonexistent threat. If Iraq, Libya, North Korea, and other hostile nations acquire intercontinental ballistic missiles they will not use them against the United States. These countries may well be led by madmen, but they are not led by suicidal, stupid madmen. Any dictator who wished to instill terror in the American populace would be much more likely to smuggle the bomb into the country than to launch it in on a ballistic missile. The source of any missile that is fired is easily traced, so retaliation against a missile attack would be swift, certain, and severe. For a bomb that is smuggled in, however, a dictator could plausibly deny responsibility while still tacitly admitting it, and could conceivably avoid retaliation. Even assuming that someone someday may be so monumentally stupid as not to care that the United States will retaliate,

we do not think that person would pick the most expensive, difficult way of attacking. It would be far easier, for example, to develop cruise missile technology to use to attack the United States.

When President Eisenhower said "beware the military industrial complex" he knew what he was talking about. The main enthusiasts driving this program are the companies that are building ABM systems and that are certain they can be deployed and work. Senators who have companies in their States employing their constituents tend to echo the claims of these industries. In our view, though, support for building a system that will probably not work, will undermine national security, will cost \$48 billion, and will address a nonexistent threat is ill-advised, even if it does create a few jobs.

Far better uses can be found for that money. The United States is \$5 trillion in debt, and is cutting tens of billions of dollars in spending on the poor, the elderly, the sick, and children. A couple of days ago, we could not even come up with a little more money to pay the heating and air conditioning bills of the poor. Frankly, we do not understand our colleagues' priorities. This \$300 million additional spending is clearly a mistake; the Dorgan amendment should not be tabled.